

The Orphan Boy.

BY MRS. A. J. DUFFESON.

The church bell was slowly tolling, and as its measured strokes fell solemnly on the ear, a funeral procession was wending its way through the pleasant streets of the thrifty village of C. But at a glance the observer would have known that it was not the remains of one whom the world call honorable or great, that lay in that stately coffin, nor the procession such as follows the rich to his last resting place. Only a few neighbors, out of compassion, and in sense of duty, perhaps, followed the remains of poor Mrs. Gaston to the city of the dead—only a few kind neighbors, not solicited by any ties stronger than those which bind us to our kind, that heaved the coffin, a forlorn-looking little boy in clerical attire, and saw him slowly descend into the following:—and saw him, the slender, frail

lindened by tears—a timid, frightened look on his neighbors, who have contributed their share to the minister's cast-off clothing. But the large hair which for once had been combed out of its habitual tangle, nor the uncoiled, baggy trousers entirely disguised the figure of a poor man. The head was bowed, the little hands slender fingers but tears fell thick and fast and it was the little boy's mother who lay down so still in the cheap coffin, and that she had seen his all.

The procession arrived at the church, and the minister quickly took their places. Then the minister proceeded with the funeral services. He was a young, fine looking man, and a general favorite, during his residence of half a year.

"My friends, before Mrs. Gaston died, she asked me to promise that her little boy should not be taken to the almshouse. I cannot help the request, and to-morrow afternoon, if you are willing, I will meet the ladies at their sewing-circle and will show what arrangements can be made for the orphan."

The ladies desponded looked at each other. The evident astonishment that their minister should have made such a promise, he should have so objected, it was made so plain, he should have said—

"Signify the little procession moved on again, till it arrived at the quiet grave-yard in the hill, and all that remained of poor Mrs. Gaston, was the lifeless corpse."

ers to drop a farewell tear for the departed child, and to commend Johnny to God. There was enough to make the fondest father weep for the child's orphanage of grief. When the coffin was being lowered, he cried out in a distracted voice—

"Oh, mother, mother, do not go away and leave me! If you do, Johnny will go all alone in the world. No one loves Johnny but you, mother."

Kind hearts and women tried to comfort the poor child, and take him in their arms. But he would not listen to them, for he knew himself to be taken; he screamed and kicked, and was perfectly unmanageable, until at last the minister, for whom Johnny had certainly the greatest fondness, took him gently but gently by the hand, and whispering in some words in his ear, about Jesus and the angels, to which he listened eagerly, un-

tered. Then the minister took him un-  
der his arms and carried him away,  
and when he arrived at his own house with  
him, the poor, tired child was fast asleep.  
“Mr. Irving, do you suppose you can  
ask any one willing to take poor little John-  
ny?” said Mrs. Newton to the minister, when  
he left her boarder, that evening, when they  
were at tea.

“I have not thought of any one in particu-  
lar,” replied Mr. Irving, “but there are so  
many rich wealthy people in C., surely they  
would not be willing to see the poor child  
taken to the alm-house.”

“But Mr. Irving, think one moment—  
who would be willing to have such a child  
in their house? He has such a temper that  
he is perfectly unmanageable; he is always  
quarrelling and quarrelling with boys in the  
street, and he is as ignorant as a heathen.”

"But," interrupted Mr. Irving, "consider, the poor child has had no one to teach her, and her father lived, all would have been different; but, as you are aware, he was an engineer and a poor one, and was not well by an accident. The little property he left was soon lost by his wife's bad management, and lack of energy. She was brought up and educated by wealthy parents; and while it was their pride that they should have a daughter who would marry their beautiful daughter should possess every accomplishment that wealth could bestow, they as studiously avoided that she should come in contact with the world in anything like a practical way, so that here she would be crossed in the slightest particular. But in three her father's riches took

While her family were in the deepest trouble, on this account, Frederick Gaston married her. He possessed a small property, and he was a man of industry and energy. As the result of his own labor; and had been given, would doubtless in a few years have acquired a competency. But soon after her marriage, his wife was killed; and his health, which was as she was, was compelled by circumstances to leave her to rear and educate her son, and take the charge of her affairs alone. That she possessed the strength of character which a position of such responsibility would require, and that her practical training would have given her, she might have kept her pleasant home. But I feel not tell you how, through lack of this, she was wasted, and she reduced to hard labor. And what wonder is it, Mrs. Newman said; but he is *yes* so young; that I feel certain he can easily be brought into the

"Spoken exactly like the dear good old mother," said the young man, "sympathising so that you are, Mr. Irving." "Well," replied Mrs. Newton. "I never saw a capricious young person in my life but was as sure of accomplishing prodigious results. But my dear sir, allow me to give you as my opinion, that Johnny is utterly insupportable. I do not believe you know so much about him as I do, or you would not look him to keep him a day or two without his mother was sick, and she says she would not have him for his weight in gold. He is spoiled and combative, him nicely, and, tried to keep him in the house; but when she



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